

# Overview of Rockville Environmental Ordinances and Guidelines

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*The following highlights the main environmental ordinances and guidelines that the City enforces. Please note that this list is not all inclusive.*

## **Water Quality Protection Ordinance (Chapter 23.5 of the City Code)**

On July 16, 2007, the Mayor and Council adopted a Water Quality Protection Ordinance. The Ordinance has the following objectives:

- Protecting surface and ground waters within the City
- Prolonging the useful life of the City's storm drains and sanitary sewers
- Safeguarding the City employees working in the storm drains and sanitary sewers
- Ensuring that the City remains in compliance with its Clean Water Act requirements

These objectives were met by creating a series of "prohibited discharges," items/substances like oil that cannot be put in the storm drain, establishing a duty to report and cleanup these discharges, and clarifying the City's ability to conduct inspections and enforce the ordinance.

## **Floodplain Management Ordinance (Chapter 10 of the City Code)**

The Floodplain Management Ordinance is intended and designed to comply with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program and various applicable State programs by establishing provisions to protect and preserve public health, safety and welfare. The ordinance provides a comprehensive approach to floodplain management and preservation and minimizes public and private property damage caused by flooding by establishing floodplain regulations and variance provisions for development in a floodplain.

## **Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 10.5 of the City Code)**

The Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance has the following objectives:

- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of Rockville's urban forest
- Replace tree cover in non-forest areas within the City
- Establish procedures, standards and requirements for afforestation, or the planting of open areas that are not presently covered by forest, and reforestation within the City
- Meet the requirements of the Natural Resource Article, Section 5-1601 through 5-1613 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. This Article requires Maryland municipalities to adopt the State's Forest Conservation Law or adopt their own law. It contains many of the same requirements as Rockville's Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance. However, City law has more stringent penalties for clearing trees and forest.

## **Sediment Control and Stormwater Management (Chapter 19 of the City Code)**

Under Maryland law, local jurisdictions must have ordinances regulating pollution from stormwater and sediment washing off of construction sites. For more information on state requirements and stormwater management in general, please visit the [Maryland Department of Environment](#) or see [Title 26 of the Code of Maryland Regulations](#).

[Chapter 19 of the Rockville City Code and the implementing regulations](#) includes various requirements to control water pollution from construction and development, including:

- Development must implement Environmental Site Design to the maximum extent practicable. For more information about obtaining a Stormwater Management Permit for development, please call the Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, at 240-314-8500.
- Construction site operators must prevent sediment from leaving their site by constructing and maintaining sediment control best management practices (BMPs). Any person considering work involving grading, clearing or construction should call the Department of Public Works at 240-314-8500 to determine if a Sediment Control Permit is required.
- Owners of private stormwater management systems must periodically perform maintenance to assure the system's functionality. For more information on stormwater system maintenance, please call Steve Davis at 240-314-8875.

## **Commercial and Multi-Family Recycling Requirements (Section 1-8(b)(22) of the City Code)**

Rockville has incorporated Montgomery County's existing "[Smart Organization Reduce & Reuse Tons](#)" (SORRT) and "[Think Reduce and Recycle at Apartments and Condominiums](#)" (TRRAC) programs into the City's Code. The County programs require multi-family dwellings with seven or more units in a building and all commercial entities regardless of size to collect and recycle at least 50 percent of their solid waste by weight or volume. Larger businesses (those with 100 or more employees) and multi-family dwellings (those with 101 units or more) are also required to prepare a recycling plan and report annually to the county.

## **Green Building Ordinance (Chapter 5 of the City Code)**

On May 10, 2010, the Mayor and Council adopted comprehensive amendments to [Chapter 5 of the City Code, "Building and Building Regulations"](#) that included several green provisions, such as increased energy efficiency and water conservation. Article XIV, titled, "Green Building Regulations," improves the efficiency and environmental quality of buildings and homes. The ordinance is effective July 1, 2010 and applies to new or substantially renovated commercial and residential properties. It is designed to ensure energy efficiency and create buildings that are environmentally sustainable.

## **Rockville's Comprehensive Master Plan**

The [Comprehensive Master Plan](#) (CMP) outlines a broad vision for Rockville's future growth and directs all development activities. The CMP guides development, conservation and capital improvement projects to improve the quality of life in the community. The plan must comply with the State of Maryland's regulatory requirements and addresses a wide variety of goals and objectives, including: land use, urban design, housing, infrastructure, parks and open space, environment, transportation, economic development and historic preservation. Key plan elements that relate to the environment include:

- Chapter 5 of the CMP, "[The Environment - Sensitive Areas and Critical Issues](#)," describes policies and recommendations for the integration of environmental protection in all public and private development and land use decisions.
- That [Water Resources Element](#) of the CMP consists of analyses of the City's long-term drinking water and wastewater capacity and also addresses water resource protection, groundwater resources and water quality standards.
- The [Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan \(PROSP\)](#) is a long-range policy document that sets overall direction in terms of goals and objectives for parks in recreation for the next 20 years.

## **Environmental Guidelines**

Adopted in July 1999, the [Environmental Guidelines](#) provide guidance during the development review process to address environmental concerns, ensure a comprehensive program for watersheds and other natural resource protection, and establish a consistent level of environmental protection through adherence to performance standards.